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Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EB-03 OMB-01 EUR-10 NSC-10 NSCE-00

L-02 INT-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 INR-10 DRC-01

RSC-01 STR-01 /055 W
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R 190824Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6458

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 3409

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, ETRD, RO
SUBJECT: TRADE INQUIRY: COKING COAL

REF: A) STATE 183271; B) BUCHAREST 3261

1. DURING DISCUSSION AT MIN FOREIGN TRADE WITH BUTNARU AND COUNSELLOR FODOR FROM ROMANIAN COMMERCIAL OFFICE IN NEW YORK, BUTNARU TOLD EMBOFF THAT PROGRAM HE DESCRIBED IS ESSENTIALLY SAME ONE FOR WHICH DINESCU IS SEEKING EXTENDED AND ENLARGED CONTRACTS IN UNITED STATES. BUTNARU, IN HIS CAPACITY AS DIRECTOR FOR NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS AT MIN FOREIGN TRADE, IS IN CONTACT WITH DINESCU TO CARRY OUT COORDINATING AND GUIDANCE FUNCTION OF MIN FOREIGN TRADE. THERE APPEARS TO BE DIFFERENCE IN APPROACH TO THIS PROJECT WITHIN GOR, HOWEVER, WITH MINERALIMPORTEXPORT, A FOREIGN TRADE ORGANIZATION REPORTING TO MINISTRY OF METALLURGY, FAVORING LONG TERM PURCHASING CONTRACTS, AND WITH MIN FOREIGN TRADE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS FROM MINISTER NICOLAE FAVORING LONG TERM AGREEMENT INVOLVING ROMANIAN DIRECT INVESTMENT AND PART OWNERSHIP IN JOINT OPERATION IN U.S. TO PRODUCE COKING COAL FOR LONG TERM SALES TO ROMANIA AND TO THIRD COUNTRY MARKETS. BUTNARU'S POSITION CARRIES WEIGHT OF MORE POWERFUL MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE, WHILE DINESCU REPRESENTS SALES AND PURCHASING RESPONSIBILITY OF MINISTRY OF METALLURGY
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WHICH IS PROBABLY LESS INFLUENTIAL IN EITHER FOREIGN COMMERCE

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OR INTERNAL GOR POLITICS. IN THIS SITUATION WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT US FIRMS MOVE CAREFULLY IN APPROACHING THIS PROJECT, KEEPING IN MIND THE INTERESTS OF GOR OFFICIALS. WE WILL DO WHAT WE CAN HERE TO URGE COORDINATED GOR APPROACH TO US FIRMS.

2. BUTNARU INTERESTED IN MEETING MACBRIDE DURING OCTOBER 2-4 VISIT, AND WILL ARRANGE SPECIFIC TIME AFTER MACBRIDE'S ARRIVAL. MASSEY REP SHOULD ALSO CONTACT US FOR CALL ON BUTNARU.

3. MIN FOREIGN TRADE OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED INTEREST IN JOINT PRODUCTION AND SALES VENTURE IN US, AND SAID THEY WOULD PURSUE THIS POINT WITH BOTH CONSOLIDATED AND MASSEY. IF NO SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT CAN BE WORKED OUT WITH EITHER FIRM, MINISTRY WILL REQUEST THAT WE APPROACH DIRECTLY ANOTHER US FIRM. MINISTRY OFFICIALS EXPRESSED THEIR THANKS FOR USG ASSISTANCE AND FOR RESPECTING GOR REQUEST FOR NO PUBLICITY.
MARTENS

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